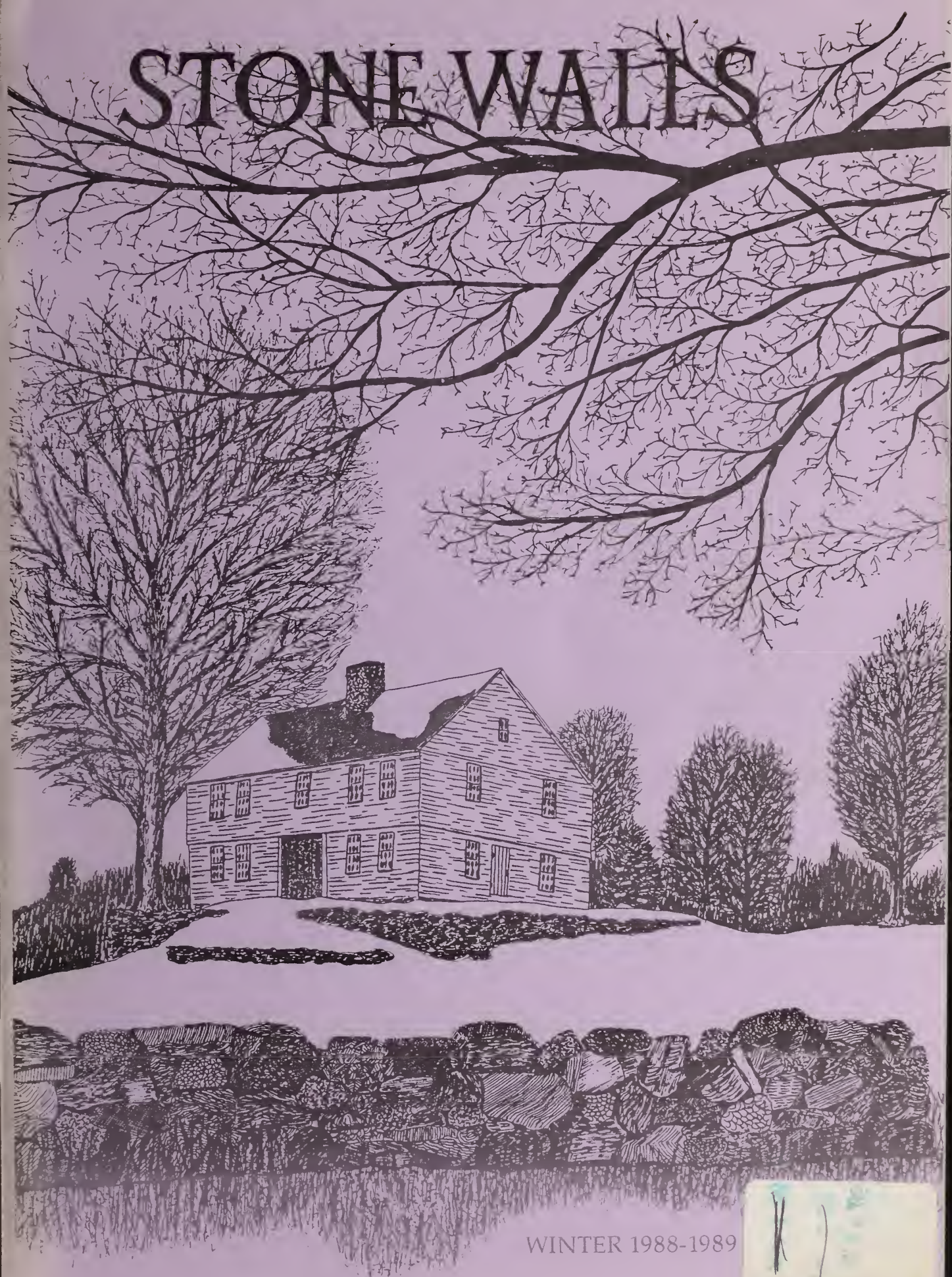
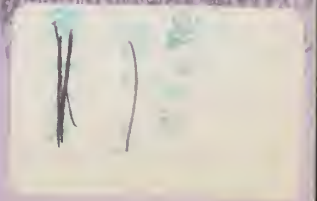


# STONE WALLS



WINTER 1988-1989





# Editorial

The newest neighbor to join the staff of *Stone Walls* must write an editorial by way of initiation. My appeal to your consciences is not going to be novel insofar as *Stone Wall* readers are concerned: I am reminding you that what you remember is of interest to others, and in some instances may be fascinating to a reader who just had no idea --!

It is human nature to regard what is familiar to us as of no importance to anyone else. Not so. Although we know that a bore is a person who thinks that everything they do and say is important to everyone else, everyone has had some particular incident or accident occur in the course of events that would cause someone else, reading of it, to remark: "Oh, I remember that!" and be pleased for being reminded. Or astonished, or impressed, or inspired if, as is often the case, they did not know of the person, place, thing or event.

Those of you who read *Stone Walls* have seen a prodigious amount of change in your lifetimes. In 1927, when Lindberg flew the ocean solo from New York to Paris, my grandmother claimed she was ready to die because everything that could happen had happened in her lifetime: she had come from candles and horses to electricity and cars and steam heat, and would not believe the improvements we take for granted. Do you recall your introduction to one of the wonders of progress — or the reaction of someone else, less sophisticated than yourself? What has disappeared from your neighborhood? Help us recall the characters who made life interesting! Please share your treasures of remembrance with your neighbors. We'll help in every way that we can, and your satisfaction will be its own reward.

Doris H. Wackerbarth

STONE WALLS

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Cover drawing by William S. Hart

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STONE WALLS 1989

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*Excerpts from the*  
**Autobiography of Samuel L. Campbell**  
**1824-1902**

**PART IV**

*(Samuel Campbell grew up in Chester. In April 1846, he and his brother, William, left for the Oregon territory, arriving at the Whitman Mission that fall. The following spring, the two brothers began their homeward trek.)*

We were a happy bunch as we approached civilization again, and when we rode into the river town of St. Joseph, Missouri, we were doubtless a motley looking bunch of hombres from the wide open spaces of the plains.

We had no difficulty in disposing of our stock and at a very good price, but I must confess that it was with a lot of regret that I parted with my faithful little horse, Tex, which brother and I had purchased from a Mexican at Independence in the Spring of 1846. Our hotel quarters were too much of a luxury and too abrupt a change from wide open plains to the narrow confines of four walls. I was stricken our first morning in town with a severe cold. I had been so anxious to get the news that I had read all the papers I could get my hands on and read until after midnight and by a poor light so the cold settled in my eyes.

We soon boarded a Missouri River boat and arriving at St. Louis, we changed to a boat on the broad Mississippi. Thence, up the old Ohio to Wheeling, West Virginia and from there by stagecoach to Baltimore, Maryland. Our boat from Baltimore to New York City was a palatial ship compared to some of the river boats we had traveled on and my eyes were getting

better by now. Our last water voyage was up the noble Hudson to Troy, New York. The last lap of the journey by stage again to Chester, Hampden County, Massachusetts, arriving home on the *sixteenth day of September, 1847.*

As we came to the top of the hill east of our home, the first person of the home folks we saw was old Uncle Josh standing in his door with his hands on the top of the doorway of his little house near our own home. He saw us and came waddling out toward us, he couldn't run for he was getting quite old and he weighed two hundred sixty pounds. In greeting him, we were almost afraid to ask about the folks for we had received no message from the family since leaving home a year and a half ago. Uncle Josh soon told us that all the folks were alive and well so it was indeed a happy reunion that night around the old home fireside. We talked far into the night for the folks had many questions and we were as anxious to hear the news of the friends and neighbors.

We soon found there had been many changes in the time we had been absent. A few had gone to their final reward, others had departed for other lands and there was local news interesting to returning pilgrims. Father told us the government

was establishing a mail route to the Pacific by way of the Isthmus and that the war with Mexico was well in hand. The ships for the mail and passenger service were now under construction in New York City. Three of the ships were to run from the east coast to the Isthmus and three from the Isthmus to San Francisco, California. The companies building these ships were: Howland & Aspinwall and George Law & Co. After the family had received our full report of the Oregon Company it was unanimously decided that the family would migrate to the western country, but there would be much to be done before an undertaking of such a trip by the whole family could be underway.

It was decided that father should go to New York and make a personal investigation as to the probable time the ships referred to would be in operation and to ascertain from the company if possible the approximate cost of a trip to the west coast.

The Company was unable to give father any thing at all definite as to the time the ships would be ready or the cost of the trip. There had been a controversy between the two companies constructing the ships due, in part, to a misunderstanding as to which ships were to carry mail and passengers. Each company charged that the contracts were so loosely drawn up that they had been unable to follow the specifications and plans as to the final arrangements of each ship.

The company assured father that they would let him know at the earliest date possible, so he returned home in none too optimistic a spirit, so far as getting water transportation to the Pacific coast was concerned. The three ships assigned to the Pacific Ocean run would, of course, have to be taken around Cape Horn and

that would consume considerable time which taken together with the indefinite date as to when the ships would be completed. These considerations almost eliminated further planning to get to Oregon on one of these new ships. I secured a contract early in the Fall delivering beech timber to a manufacturer of Planes and Moulding tools. I was thus engaged until late in the winter of 1847-48. The other boys had various kinds of work, some of them unfinished tasks and contracts which they had started before William and I arrived home and they could not finish until late in the Spring of '48. So then it was decided that we would not attempt to start west until the early Spring of '49. About this time, the Spring of '48 news came that Gold had been discovered in California. As the news spread, it caused an excitement that was bound to cause a stampede to this gold discovery. This, of course, would create a greater demand for passage to the California coast especially by the water transportation route. We abandoned all hopes we may have had of making the trip west by water and immediately commenced to make preparations for an overland trip. The actual gold discovery was made in January, 1848, but it has always been referred to as the California Gold Discovery of '49 which was the year the great emigration to the fields was made.

We all were kept busy during the summer of '48, two of the boys were over in the State of New York and I had a contract of getting out railroad ties and made a very handsome profit. In the late Fall, we prepared to box and crate all the household furniture and fixtures that could possibly be spared, even mother's new cook stove, and these goods were sent to Boston where they were shipped to



Oregon by a Whaler for twenty dollars per ton. I went to Boston with this shipment and while there, bought some farm tools and sawmill irons and shipped them together with the household equipment. This Whaler would go via Cape Horn, of course, and she was to sail the first of January.

From the tempestuous Pacific this ship would eventually reach the broad mouth of the Columbia which would bring them to the Willamette River and to Portland, Oregon, where our goods were consigned to, or in care of, Pettygrue and Company.

Early in December, our youngest brother, Hector, and I left our boyhood home for the last time and went into New York where we visited an uncle, mother's brother. From there we went into Pennsylvania traveling by stage, that is an open two-horse sleigh. The sleighing was fine and when we stopped to change horses at a village, two ladies were taken in as passengers, a mother and a daughter. Their names were DRYER. When the mother learned that I had been to Oregon, she was very much interested in hearing about that country. She told us that her husband was going and that she and her daughter were to follow soon. After a few hours of pleasant conversation with these ladies, as we traveled through the pretty white landscape, they left us at Jamestown. As they were getting out of the sleigh, Mrs. Dryer's parting words were: "I hope that we shall meet in Oregon." We did, and within the next two years. Her husband started a paper in Portland, and he was the founder of the present Portland Oregonian.

Our destination was a town called *Bus-ties, Pennsylvania*, where another uncle, mother's brother (Francis Soule) lived. He owned and operated a flour and grist

mill and a wagon shop, so our object in coming so early in the winter had a two-fold purpose, business and pleasure. We had looked forward to a pleasant visit with this uncle and the family, but we also desired to use his shop to build some wagons for the overland trip to Oregon.

We arrived at his place of business and spoke to our uncle without telling or saying who we were and as no advanced notice had been given him, we doubted if he would even surmise who we were.

He looked us over for a moment and said, "I think that you are Uncle Hector's boys if I'm not badly mistaken." We replied that he was not. He immediately escorted us over to his home nearby and presented us to our aunt and then over to his son's home next door where we met the son and his wife. We soon informed our uncle that our presence here was not wholly social but that we desired to get the use of this wagon shop for the next few weeks.

We were happy to find that the shop was not crowded with work at this time and that we were welcome to help ourselves to all the tools and equipment it contained. This shop provided blacksmith tools and we found everything at our disposal necessary for constructing wagons.

Brother Hector had served an apprenticeship in wagon making and blacksmithing, so he was fully qualified to take the lead in the construction of a complete wagon. We desired to build one heavy wagon for the family baggage and provisions, and a lighter wagon with springs and with three seats and this was for the women to ride in and it was to be constructed with tranverse springs over each axle and horizontal springs on the sides, making a very comfortable vehicle considering that it had to be made strong and sturdy for the purpose it was to serve.

We had a most pleasant winter with our uncle and aunt and their friends even though we were busy most every day with our wagon making. We were delightfully entertained through the winter evenings and since so many people had the California "Gold Fever" that I was in great demand as those people were desirous of learning all they could about the western country.

It is twenty miles from Bustie to Warren, Pennsylvania, where we expected to

get a boat in the Spring when the family came and from there go down the Alleghany River to Pittsburgh, then on the Ohio and finally to the broad Mississippi at Cairo, Illinois.

The wagons were all ready and the home folks in Massachusetts were now expected daily. As soon as they had visited here for a few days, we would hire teams to take our baggage and the wagons to Warren, then we would be on our way to the far distant country of Oregon.

\* \* \* \* \*

*The Campbell family began their trip west on May 5, 1849, arriving in Milwaukie, Clackamas County, Oregon on September 10, 1849. Making the trip were Samuel's parents, Hector and Olive Campbell, three sisters and four brothers and two grandchildren of Hector and Olive. A farmer and surveyor, Samuel married Amanda Jane Malock in 1852 who died in*

*1864. He later married Sarah Emma Cox, a widow with one child. He had three children from his first marriage and four children in his second marriage. Leaving Oregon in 1878, he and his family farmed in Missouri for several years, then he was a surveyor in Idaho. He died in Seattle, Washington in 1902 at the age of seventy-eight.*





### *Footnote by Esther M. Moulthrop*

The lately deceased Cathaline Alford Archer wrote this historical discourse for the occasion of the 175th anniversary of the founding of the First Church of Christ in Becket. (1933)

She was a lineal descendant of the fore-named Deacon Elijah Alford, one of the Minute-men from Becket in the Revolution, who later emigrated to the Ohio wilderness.

Mrs. Archer and her husband, Dr. John Clark Archer, of Yale University, summered in Becket many years, and served, in 1936 on the committee for placing a marker on the site of the first Meeting House in Becket. She authored a pageant presented in 1952 and again 1965 entitled "Becket's First Fifty Years." At the age of seventy-eight she wrote a documentary history of Becket in the eighteenth century that formed the first part of "A Bicentennial History of Becket."

The one hundredth anniversary of the present church building in 1950, and also

the year that the Town of Becket deeded the Old Town Hall to the Church, marked the beginning of annual Homecoming celebrations in which Dr. and Mrs. Archer participated.

Becket Center Homecomings, each one different and special, continue to be a highlight of the church year, thanks to the support and participation of the Federated Church in North Becket Village, members and friends in Becket Center, former residents from near and far, and descendants of the early founders who return each year to tread the hallowed ground, breathe the Becket air, visit the old cemetery, hear the sweet-toned church bell, fellowship with old and new friends, and enjoy spiritual renewal.

*Toiling, rejoicing, sorrowing  
Onward through Time she goes.  
Our prayers go up in Thankfulness  
That Strength and Beauty are in  
His Sanctuary.*

— Edna Cross Turner, 1878-1948





# *The Founding of the First Church of Becket*

*by Cathaline Alford Archer*

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## **"An Historical Discourse" on Events to 1806 A.D.**

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*"And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the law of God, and took a great stone, and set it up there under an oak, that was by the sanctuary of the Lord,*

*And Joshua said unto all the people, Behold, this stone shall be a witness unto us; for it hath heard all the words of the Lord which he spake unto us; it shall be therefore a witness unto you lest ye deny your God."*

*Joshua 24:26, 27.*

We are celebrating an anniversary based upon the foundation of this church in the year 1758. But the first stone of this structure, figuratively speaking, was set up within a few days of twenty-three years previously, that is, at the very opening of 1736. We have in mind the "covenant," or provision for religion, customarily made in connection with the opening of new territory for settlement. Like the "first churches" in all the older towns of western Massachusetts, this *First Church of Becket* had its real origin in a provision of the original grant to the proprietors of the town. Becket was the fourth of the Housatonic townships, along with Tyringham, New Marlborough and Sandisfield, opened by the Great and General Court of the Province of Massachusetts Bay on the then new road "betwixt Westfield and Sheffield," each "of the contents of six miles square," with sixty-three home lots laid out in each

township, one for the first settled minister, one for the second minister, one for the school and one each for the proprietors. In such manner, the obligation was placed upon the proprietors to provide in the very beginning for the establishment of "Gospel preaching" in the new towns. Similar terms in the earlier grant of lands adjoining in the Housatonic valley had set a precedent which was zealously followed, and the minister and the meeting house were primary considerations.

There were already two churches within the territory now embraced in Berkshire County, when the original grant for the four Housatonic townships was given in January, 1736. In June, 1735, Jonathan Hubbard of the Yale College class of 1724, had been called to settle as minister in Sheffield whose church was organized in the autumn following. The Stockbridge Church virtually began with

the settlement of John Sergeant, also from Yale, as missionary amongst the Stockbridge Indians. He was ordained and took up his work permanently shortly before the organization of the Sheffield church, that is, late in 1735. The church in Great Barrington was set apart seven years later, with Samuel Hopkins settled as its minister. New Marlborough organized its church, the first in the Housatonic townships, on the last day of October in 1744, with Thomas Strong ordained as minister.

A meeting house had already been built in Tyringham (No. 1 of the Housatonic towns) but, because of continuous disturbances during King George's or the "first French" War, the organization of the church was delayed until 1750. Adonijah Bidwell, a classmate at Yale of Thomas Strong and the chaplain at Fort Massachusetts and at Louisburg under Sir William Pepperel, was settled as its first minister. Six years later the church in Sandisfield was added to the number which antedate the Becket church.

Becket was cut off from these neighbors on her further western borders because for two decades there were no means of communication between her and them. "When the county was first settled, and for many years afterwards, the only road from the east over the Green Mountain range, was from Blandford, in the county of Hampden, through the south east part of Otis, the north part of Sandisfield and through Tyringham to Great Barrington. This was called the great road from Boston to Albany." It was 1770 when a road was first opened to the westward of "Nathaniel Kingsley's lot on the Burnt mountain or Brier Hill, so called" (i.e. Jacob's Ladder), connecting with the Stockbridge County road, the present Route 20. Therefore, in the early days, Becket was thrown wholly into association with the Scotch Presbyterian settlement in Bland-

ford, which was then backward in matters of the church and town — evidence of which lies in the fact that the meeting house begun by their proprietors in 1740 was not finished until sixty-five years afterwards. Blandford was the only port of entry into Becket. The Proprietors of Township No. 4, that is, Becket, reported in October, 1738, that they "had found a road [probably an Indian trail] from Glasco [Blandford] to said Township and cleared the same up so as to make it passable." For a good many years this was the only road into Becket. It was used by the proprietors in laying out the town and all the first settlers went up that way. Some of it is still in use, that part just south of Bonnyrigg Corners, but the section known as "the soldiers' road" is altogether impassable, except on foot.

Even before the proprietors of Becket set about clearing the roads they recorded a vote to provide for a "Meeting House." On February 27th, 1739, they took this action, "Voted that the Meeting House shall be set on land left for a way against Lot No. 22." Their first road into the township was laid out to pass by the site thus chosen. Settlers were slow in coming in to fulfill their plans but a few families must have been in the town by 1753, for the first birth recorded was that of a son of Nathaniel Kingsley, born November 15th, 1753. Jonathan Walker was evidently permanently settled on the Walker mill grant by that time. Within five years thereafter two other Kingsley brothers from old Windham in Connecticut, the Wadsworths from Norwich, the Messengers and Elijah Alford from Simsbury, and several other families from Connecticut were added to the settlement. In the early autumn of 1758, the proprietors of Becket invited Ebenezer Martin of the Yale College class of 1756 to settle as the first minister in the plantation then merely known as Township No. 4. He

came from the Canada Parish in Windham, Connecticut, and, it is safe to say, the Kingsleys' influence must have had something to do with the choice. Mr. Martin arrived in his field in October and immediately began the work of "gathering" the church.

28th day these two reverend gentlemen gathered a church of Christ by prayer and supplication to God." On the 22nd of February, 1759, Mr. Martin's ordination was performed with a council of ministers and delegates from Westfield, Blandford and Granville. The Covenant was signed by



*First Congregational Church  
Becket, Massachusetts*

Martin's early entries in excellently preserved script fill many pages in the original records of the church. From them a fairly detailed account of its organization may be reconstructed. Until the meeting house was built four years afterwards the house of "the Widow Lida King," on the property now occupied by Camp Greylock, was used for all religious gatherings. There, on the 27th of December, a fast was held "preparatory to the ordination of Mr. Martin; and the Rev. Mr. Morton of Blandford and the Rev. Mr. Smith of Granville did attend the fast and the Rev. Mr. Smith did preach the sermon and on the

five persons including the pastor, namely Ebenezer Martin, Thomas Baird, junior, Philip Goss, Isaiah Kingsley and William Watson. In December of the same year, thirteen Articles of Faith in stern Calvinistic form and temper were drawn up and signed by seven persons, four of whom had signed the Covenant. William Watson's name is missing and the names of David Lee, Daniel Waitt and Jonathan Walker are added.

Many theological questions of these times came up in Becket for discussion. At the first church meeting in March, 1759, a vote was recorded on the baptism of



children and concerning the question of eligibility for church membership (the question of the Half Way Covenant, probably). At the same meeting the first deacon was chosen, Isaiah Kingsley who served the church in that capacity for thirty-seven years. A few days after his election his son, Enos, was baptised. This was the first recorded baptism. The second deacon, Ebenezer Bush, was chosen in 1761. He served a short time only for he died of smallpox when a family by the name of Ewing brought the dread disease into his house. There is a negative vote recorded in the *Town Book of Becket* which indicates a question as to whether the town should allow his family some reparation "for the Trouble of Ewing's family having the smallpox in his House." Isaiah Kingsley's brother, Nathaniel, was the third to be designated to the office of deacon. Upon Isaiah's death, Ebenezer Walden and Dr. Oliver Brewster were elevated to this influential post and on October 8th, 1807, Elijah Alford, 2nd, and Enos Kingsley were made deacons.

The meeting house was erected in 1762 on the lot set aside for that purpose more than twenty years before. It stood north east of the present structure on the opposite side of the ancient "common." Jonathan Wadsworth, Nathaniel Kingsley, Henry Walker, James Birchard, Jr. and Jonathan Eastman were the building committee. The meeting house, a building forty-five feet long and thirty-five feet wide, was doubtless very crudely built and only partially finished. No account of any dedication is available. In fact we do not know whether there was a formal dedication. In 1770, the town voted to "putty the glass and get irons to fasten the Meeting House doors" and again, in 1772, "to give Liberty to the Subscribers for Building a Steeple, to Build the same and finish the Meeting House if they think fit. Also, if

Subscribers should fall short for Building said Steeple and finishing said House the Town will be at the charge of finishing the same properly within one year from next Fall providing it should be a fruitful Season the summer coming and if not to be Delayed one year longer." The town fathers were cautious, but were conscientious and habitually faithful in the discharge of their churchly duties.

Amongst Ebenezer Martin's later records is "A true account of the names of the heads of all the families of the township No. 4." Forty-eight names are in the list, showing by their very number that the settlement had been steadily increasing. At last in 1765 there were the necessary fifty families and the town was incorporated under the name of Becket. In explanation of this name it has been said that it was given by the Royal Governor of the Province. Sir Francis Bernard, and may have been suggested by his cousin, Lord Barrington, whose chief estate was Becket in Berkshire County, England. Ebenezer Martin, as it happened, had been dismissed from the church when the town was incorporated. His last years were troublous, partly because of some indiscretions of his own, and in some measure because of non-resident ownership of town lands which made for difficulty in collecting town taxes to support the church. Nevertheless, Martin must have been in generally good standing, since he was one of the ministerial council present at the organization of the First Church in Pittsfield on February 7th, 1764 (The Rev. Samuel Hopkins of Great Barrington, the Rev. Dr. Stephen West of Stockbridge and the Rev. Ebenezer Martin of Becket made up this council, all of them from Yale).

The town of Becket was without a minister for several years thereafter. At times the vote in town meeting was positively "to provide money for preach-

ing." But at other times it is of record that the vote "passed in the negative." In 1770 the town called as its minister, Mr. Zadock Hunn of Wethersfield, Connecticut, and of the Yale College class of 1766, and voted to allow him "the settlement of Fifty Pounds in addition to Land allowed by the Great and General Court for the second settled minister in the Town of Becket." At his ordination council Adonijah Bidwell of Tyringham was moderator, and Stephen West the scribe (according to a very conspicuous record in the *Town Book*). One pound, two shillings, sixpence was voted "for fixing up the meeting house before the ordination" and two pounds, nineteen shillings, nine pence to Benoni Messenger for the expenses of the ordination. It is of interest to learn that after Mr. Hunn's ordination Anabaptists (heretics of the time) were to be "discharged" from the payment of taxes, provided they did not neglect their proper share of the ordination expenses. The Town Records leave us in no doubt that its citizens deemed the occasion one of much importance. It was said of Zadock Hunn by one who knew him personally, that he was a man of good ability, sound in judgment, and a good counsellor. He served the Becket church with devoted zeal through the difficult years of the Revolutionary period when many churches were without their ministers. "Plain in manner but fervent in spirit," he was highly acceptable during all the eighteen years of his Becket ministry, and when he left to go the Canandaigua, New York, the church deemed itself "destitute" indeed.

During the chaotic decade following Mr. Hunn's dismissal, interest in the church was at such an exceedingly low ebb and the people of the town so "disunited in their religious sentiments" because of the great number both of Anabaptists and of

Methodists who were opposed on principle to taxation for the support of the minister, that, as one record says, "the members of this church and society found it impossible to support the administration of gospel ordinances upon any former establishment." The old system which assumed complete union between town (or state) and church had broken down and the time had come when a new method of carrying on the work of the church was necessary. Members of the old church were distinctly in the minority in town affairs and they were compelled to make some change. In consequence, after much deliberation they reorganized as an ecclesiastical society. By an act of the Legislature of the Commonwealth passed on February 17, 1798, "the First Congregational Society in the town of Becket" was accordingly incorporated. At that time sixty persons "owned" the ancient covenant and initiated plans for the erection of a new house of worship. The town voted thereupon that "the First Congregational Society have Liberty to Build a Meeting House on Land for public use near the meeting house on such place as they shall choose." Col. Bille Messenger, however, made a donation of land for the purpose. The church was "raised" on May 30th, 1800, and dedicated on the 19th of November of that year. The old house was then repaired and used for more than half a century as a "town meeting place." When the third minister, the Rev. Joseph L. Mills, came to the church in 1806, the sixty members of the new "society" had grown to eighty-nine.

The "stone" which our forefathers set up on this hill-top for a witness, still stands in various forms a monument to their diligence in serving the Lord. Its witness lays upon us of the fifth and sixth generations after the obligation to keep and cherish something of our fathers' faith. In our



confusing, changing and altogether transformed world there is need of their qualities of firm conviction, steadfast purpose and unswerving faithfulness to duty. In honoring the founders of this church, we may with earnestness of heart remind ourselves of the "witness" manifested here, — lest we deny our God.

\* \* \* \* \*

Not only did the Becket church carry on its mission in its first environment, but its principles and traditional body of beliefs were transmitted through a daughter-church in the "over mountain" country of Ohio. In the era of spiritual and intellectual awakening which began at the turn of the nineteenth century, the new frontier attracted almost undivided attention in western New England. Sixteen of Becket's most respected and influential citizens formed themselves into the Becket Land Company for the purpose of purchasing a township in the Ohio wilderness. The project was successfully carried out and one half the sixteen made plans to dispose immediately of their property in Becket with the intention of removing their families to the new land in the Western Reserve of Ohio. Eleven members of the Becket church asked for their formal dismissal that they might organize themselves into a new and separate church which they proposed to transplant with their settlement into new soil amidst almost alien circumstances.

Recently, in the old homestead in Ohio, where the first band of pioneers

gathered, was discovered the original Covenant and Articles of Faith which constituted those eleven persons a separate church. This old document, drawn up by Joseph L. Mills, states precisely that "on the second of May in the year of our Lord 1811, a regular meeting of the First Congregational Church of Becket was holden, at the Meeting House; at which were present the Rev. Messrs. William Gay Ballantine of Washington, Alvan Hyde of Lee and Jonathan Marsh of Middlefield, together with the Pastor of this Church." Also, it certifies, "that at the time and place above mentioned, the persons there named [who presented their written request to be dismissed], (that is) Deacon Elijah Alford, Olive Alford, Ruth Alford, Thatcher Conant, Elizabeth Conant, Susanna Conant, Jeremiah Lyman, Rhoda Lyman, Benjamin Higley, Sally Higley and Anna Streeter, having taken upon themselves the Confession of Faith & Covenant which are here unto annexed, were publicly formed and installed as a regular Church of Christ — By me

JOSEPH L. MILLS,  
Minister of the Gospel and  
Pastor of the First Congregational Church  
in Becket.  
May 9th, 1811."

Eight other members of the Becket Church were very soon dismissed, who joined the original eleven in founding the Church in Windham, Portage County, Ohio.

*September, 1933.*





# Huntington

*by John W. Culver*

Earliest settlement in Huntington may have been made at Mt. Pisgah where a group of families tried their chances against the elements. They lost and abandoned the colony. Locations of the houses may still be seen. An Indian settlement near a brook to the east of the flood control reservoir continued until the reservoir was built. The Indian cemetery was then moved to the Protestant Cemetery in Huntington.

One of the first men from the Huntington area to serve in the Revolution was Richard Farley, the innkeeper of the village. He heard of the battle at Bunker Hill and got astride his fastest horse to get into the fray. During the war he made bullets and other supplies for the army at a plant near where now is the easterly end of the through highway bridge near the line between Russell and Westfield. The Farley Inn was near the Common in Huntington village. The Farley apple orchard extended along the south side of the Blandford road in Blandford for perhaps a quarter of a mile.

Huntington was the business and mail center, at least during summer vacations, for two famous Americans, Dr. Russell H. Conwell of South Worthington and Dr. William Cullen Bryant of Chesterfield. They were stalwart Americans of the first order who did not really retire in old age but kept battling on for the right. Hill towns of our county were fortunate in having two inspiring Americans so near and so approachable.

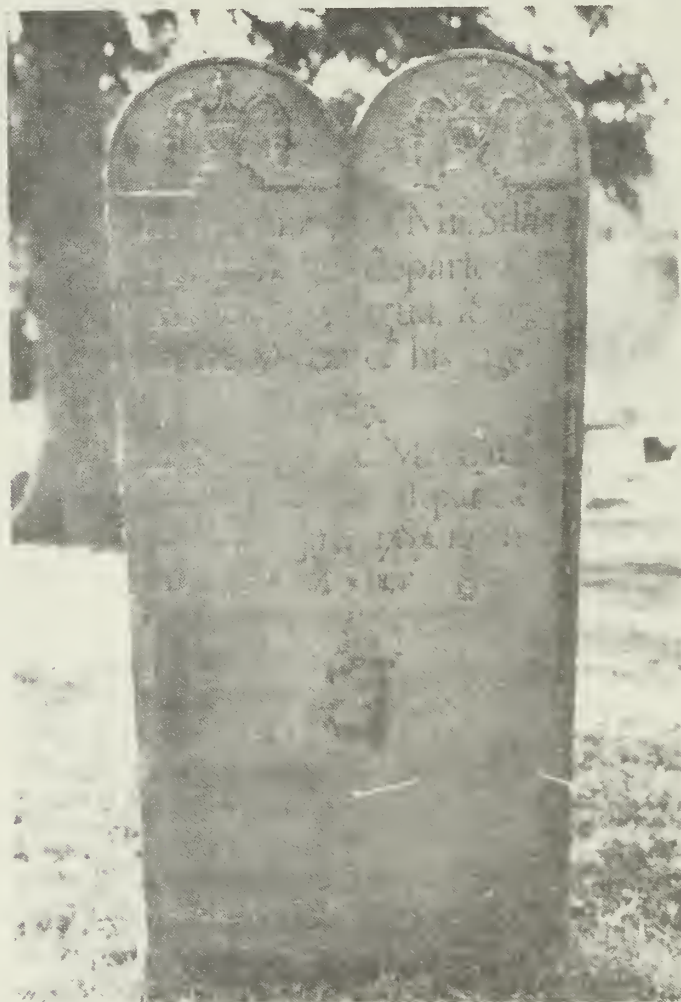
Our community shared in a sad event, together with many other sectoins of the country. The event was the seizure of a boy by British naval officers. It was the Gleason family in town near the Blandford line. Three officers came and seized the teen-aged boy who was never heard from again. Such seizures provoked the War of 1812. There were many enlistments in this section.

Common labor in building the Boston & Albany railroad was done largely by Irish emigrants at ridiculously low wages. Once, at least, the contractor failed and the Irish were starving. Farmers shared their potatoes and other crops to help out. In the spring when it was found that many families could not pay their long overdue bills for farm produce, Rev. Fr. Pyne of the Westfield Catholic Church donned his Sunday clothes and went personally to every farm and paid for the produce.

Huntington had more of a part in the First World War than readily appears. John J. Pershing, when a major, came to Huntington and announced his engagement to one of the Smith sisters of Middlefield. The announcement was made at the home of Ellsworth Stanton in Huntington, Mrs. Stanton being of the Middlefield Smith family. Mrs. Pershing was noted as a foremost advocate of woman suffrage. The Pershings were friends of the Indians and gave large sums to establish a great hospital in Arizona with equal privileges for Indians and Whites.

# History of *The Norwich Bridge Cemetery*

by Pamela G. Donovan-Hall, Trustee



The Norwich Bridge Cemetery on Littleville Road in Huntington, Mass. is privately owned and operated by the Huntington Cemetery Association, and is not controlled by the town.

The cemetery is an ancient affair. The earliest tombstone is that of Elisabeth Hubbell who died in 1783 at age 41. Many other early pioneers of our town are buried near her in the easterly part of the cemetery.

Originally the cemetery consisted of only one-half acre. Through the efforts of John H. Cook, the area was thoroughly cleared of the heavy wild growth of ivy and larger bushes and enlarged by the purchase of 6-7 acres from Mr. Salmon Thomas who owned the nearby farm. This was done for the cost of \$3000. All of this was at first an individual effort. In 1873, an association was formed by those who were interested in the improvements of

the cemetery. John J. Cook was elected President; George L. Woods, Secretary; H. Wilson Munson, Treasurer. With an executive committee of seven, the Huntington Cemetery Association began.

Within the first five years, over 260 people purchased plots, making a balance of \$2931.33 with which the association could make the necessary improvements.

With larger quarters, the remains of 14 people were moved to clear the way for roads within the cemetery. This was done with the consent of the families.

In 1876 the association organized into a corporation and by-laws were adopted. Besides the President and Treasurer, five trustees were appointed to oversee the entire and exclusive management of the cemetery, subject to the by-laws. At this time, the price of a lot was not to exceed 10¢ per square foot.

The annual meetings were held at members homes or at a room at the Railroad Station. At these meetings, it took many votes, revotes and reconsiderations to act upon some improvements. These improvements did not happen overnight.

In 1899, water to the cemetery was needed. The association could purchase spring rights from Henry E. Stanton's land behind the cemetery for the sum of \$100.00. The second option was to tie into the Fire District's line at the cost of \$400.00. Nothing was done either way and in 1905, it again was discussed. Finally, in 1908, the water rights from Mr. Stanton were purchased.

Other improvements would have been easier and less expensive *had* the association not dragged their feet. In 1896, it was voted to build a vault not costing more than \$500.00. The next year, one was built by E. A. Allen and Watson Coit for the price of \$400.00. Four years later, it

was voted to move the vault out of public view, which was immediately done. One year later, a new blueprint was drawn by W. P. Williams, to be used as a working plan for future use. In this plan, the vault had to be moved again. This was accomplished three years later.

The upkeep alone of the cemetery was a major expense. Added to this, a flood in 1879 caused a considerable amount of damage. Also, damage was caused by the widening of the road in front of the cemetery and the trustees sought payment from the county. Due to bad road conditions within the cemetery, heavy teams were prohibited from using them in 1905.

The price of a lot also included payment for perpetual care. Some people also donated funds for this service and for the general use of the cemetery. The first recorded was for the amount of \$300.00 by O. D. Thomas from the estate of Eliza Ring; Albert Steiger donated \$25.00 in 1916 and A. P. Pettis made a generous donation of \$2000.00 in 1920.

A soldiers monument was placed in the cemetery in July of 1895. It was made in Greenfield, Mass. of Quincy granite and stands 12 feet tall. This was a gift from a native of our town, Alfred G. Taylor, who at the time, was a prominent lawyer in New York City. It commemorated the death of his brother Frederic Taylor who was killed at Malvern Hill, Virginia during the Civil War. Also on one side of the monument is the following inscription: 'In the memory of the men of Huntington who gave their lives in defense of their country 1861-1865.' "Dedicated by General H. C. Lee, Post 176, GAR to the memory of the brave men who gave their lives that government by the people and for the people might live." The trustees accepted this 'generous and patriotic offer' and they assured Mr. Taylor that it would be cared for.





*Soldiers Monument*

In 1920, the association loaned the Huntington Lodge of Masons \$2500.00 for their mortgage. The interest rate was lowered to 4% in later years.

The construction of the Knightville Dam began in 1939. Two cemeteries had to be moved. The government purchased 8/10 of an acre of land behind the cemetery from Mr. Guy Fisk, who owned the Salmon Thomas farm nearby. Coffins, and in some cases, spades of dirt, and most of the tombstones were moved from the

Knightville and Indian Hollow cemeteries to the back section of the Norwich Bridge Cemetery. The U. S. Army Corp of Engineers paid the cemetery association \$4000.00 for continuous perpetual care for the graves. Today, only descendants can be buried in this section.

Donations to the cemetery association continued. In 1958, the family of Mr. John Decker gave the American Legion Post 233 lot #43. This was to be used for the burial of any deserving veteran. Two plots have been used, leaving space for 4-

6 more burials. Also in the 1950's, Mrs. Ida Butters gave a generous donation to the cemetery for payment of lots, or perpetual care for those who could not afford it or for the good use for improvements in the cemetery.

A town lot was set aside for the 'burial of strangers,' now used for the indigent. Throughout its history, the association has always purchased its material and supplies from the local businesses in town.

Over the years, improvements of the cemetery continued. An overhead entrance sign was erected in 1968 and a flag and pole installed by the vault in 1975.

There are approximately 2100 graves, 157 of them are veterans. These veterans are from the Spanish-American War up to the Korean War. The American Legion Post 233 annually donates the flags for their graves. My dear neighbor, Mr. Charles Cutting, is an active member of the Legion and has compiled a list of all

the veterans buried in town. This list is the first of its kind and has been a big endeavor for him.

In 1986, the Huntington Historical Society paid for a marker that was placed in the back section of the cemetery. The government never provided one indicating that the graves had been moved from the Knightville and Indian Hollow cemeteries. For sentimental reasons, a large rock was brought down from the Knightville basin area. The work was donated by my husband, Bill Hall, and also Matt Donovan and Dana Sicard and the heavy equipment was donated by their employer, Gaylon Donovan of Donovan Brothers. The placing of the rock was done under the direction of the late Frank Bates, a trustee and also a Knightville descendant. Supervising this event was Glen Knox, President and Superintendent of the cemetery. The inscription reads: "The graves in this back section were moved from the Knightville and Indian Hollow



*Knightville Marker*

Cemeteries, due to the construction of Knightville Dam in 1939. There 54 unknown graves."

Through the individual effort of Mr. Francis O'Leary of Agawam, a complete listing of tombstones and their inscriptions was completed in 1983. To the local historian, his work is invaluable.

Today, the Huntington Cemetery Association continues to follow by-laws established 115 years ago. Compared to other large cemeteries, the Norwich Bridge Cemetery has few restrictions. Anyone can purchase a lot without having to live in town; there is no cut-off date for collecting flowers; and bushes and trees can be planted with permission.

The trustees have made many personal contributions and donations to the cemetery for improvements: trees, flags, flowers, and labor. Mr. Rodney (Sonny) Lafond is the current President and Superintendent of the cemetery. Marilyn Knox has remained Treasurer for the past 7 years; Robert Smith has been trustee for 16 years; Harry Wood, trustee for 7 years, George Beals, Jr., trustee for 20 years, and his father preceded him. Glen Knox is now trustee, retiring from Superintendent and President last year after serving in that position 16 years. His father also preceded him. Many years of experience are represented on the present board.

The Norwich Bridge Cemetery, once a half-acre burial ground surrounded by a picket fence and lined with elm trees, has grown into a large concern. As you walk past the hitching posts in front and enter the cemetery, much can be learned about the town's history, a history of people spanning over 205 years. It is in good preservation and shows much care on the part of the living for the memory of the dead.

## PAST PRESIDENTS

*John J. Cook, Garry Munson, H. Wilson Munson, Schuyler Clark, Edward Pease, Elmer Pease, Charles Hamblin, Osmond Coburn, Ira S. Lindsey, Stuart Fisk.*

## PAST SEXTONS

*George K. Stanton, Frank W. Lee, Monroe Rising, Howard Eager, George Weeks, Donald Fournier.*

## PAST TREASURER/SECRETARY

*Charles M. Lindsey, Whitman P. Williams, E. A. Allen, Charles Crafts, Joseph Oliver, C. H. Kyle, Mary Perkins, Maxwell Fiske, Jr., Barbara Fiske, George Woods, W. B. Cook, William S. Tinker, Frank T. Clapp, Albert Stanton.*

## PAST TRUSTEES

*John Parks, Elijah Woods, Elias Cady, James Williams, Edward Allen, E. G. Howe, Parley Hutchins, Andrew Lindsey, Willington Sheldon, F. B. Kelso, A. P. Axtell, George Beals, O. H. Fisk, Henry Stanton, Charles Wells, Joseph Burr, Arthur Crum, Caleb Bowers, Joseph Cross, George Stanton, Almon Knox, Charles McKinney, Ralph Cole, Peter Regas, Karl Nooney, Ada Towle, Elizabeth Pierson, Frank Bates.*



# LUCIEN BURLEIGH'S Panoramic Maps

*By Lucy Conant*

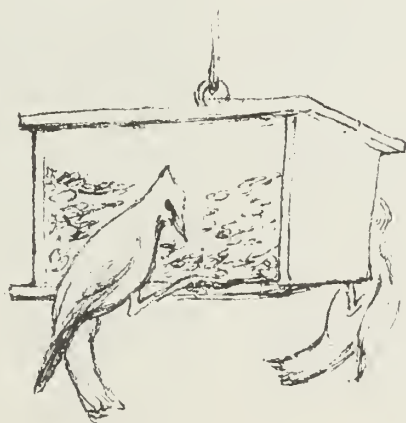
A few fortunate residents of Chester and Huntington possess copies of panoramic maps of their villages made by Lucien Burleigh of Troy, New York. These maps were drawn as if a photograph was taken of the community from one of the hills overlooking the village in the valley below. They are drawn in painstaking detail and were done in the mid 1880's. In addition to the panoramic maps of Chester and Huntington, there is supposed to be one of Middlefield. Were such maps made of other hill town villages?

Lucien Burleigh was born in Plainfield,

Connecticut in 1853. After graduating from the Worcester Technical Institute, he worked as a sketch artist for a Milwaukee firm. Later he established the Burleigh Lithographing Company in Troy, New York and for forty years was prominently identified with the lithographing industry in the city. He died at the age of seventy in 1923. His company specialized in doing panoramic maps of New York and New England. These maps provide a fascinating portrayal of our communities as they existed one hundred years ago.

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Library Scrapbook.



## Introduction

*Recently, the Westfield River Watershed Association sponsored a series of events to "Celebrate the Beauty of the River." The purpose of this celebration was to raise awareness of the beauty of our river and its importance in our lives.*

*Events included a display of children's posters, water color lessons at the riverside, exhibits of art by local artists, and photography and writing contests.*

*We are pleased to publish here in Stone Walls the winning entries of the writing contest:*

Zenon D'Astous Sr. of Huntington  
First Place for his "Requiem For a River"

Two Poems: First Place — "Waking at Dawn by the River"  
by Stephen Sossaman of Huntington.  
Second Place — Poem by Mary Mulqueen of Westfield.

## REQUIEM FOR A RIVER

I am a river and this is the last chapter of my life. Though by man's reckoning of time it was thought I would live forever.

From the green stillness of forest lands to the singing meadows of late summer I have passed beneath a potpourri of autumn leaves that emblazon the hills of October through the silence of countless winters. There was a time when forget-me-nots and marsh marigolds waded in shallow water along my shores. I sparkled like a silver ribbon in the spring sun.

Deer, fox, bear and many other forest creatures came to drink and be refreshed in my life-giving waters. The great osprey and eagle cruised my banks in search of fish. Sometimes a lone gull would come

far inland on the wings of the wind. Families of ducks would spend long summers in my coves and eddies.

In the very long ago when I was young and the freshness of autumn came, colored leaves swirled in my quiet places like a watery kaleidoscope. Ever beautiful. At night, Indian campfire's smoke drifted over me like incense. I did not mind the Indians coming to my shores, they only took what was needed to sustain their simple way of life. They always left me as I was. They worshipped me in song, dance and prayer. With the passing of days and weeks, seasons and years, the Indian was only a legend, a half-forgotten memory, tattered pages in some schoolboy's history book.

And so down the corridors of time I

passed, the vernal sun that once warmed me from a sapphire sky at winter's end now burns with an opaque ominous light in an acid atmosphere. The shroud of doomed men. Nature never took from me more than she would give back. In winter I ran quietly beneath a mantle of ice and snow. A time of rest. Come spring her silver rain and warm sun filled me with new life. Summer, my time to give. Autumn, my time of beauty.

For all that I have given man, he has not forgotten me. He has remembered all too well. He has charted the veins that feed me. He cut them off, dammed them up. The surface waters that come to me

sweep filthy parking lots and dirty streets. He has lined my shores with junk and garbage. The residue of his affluence, the stinking scum from his factories and cities is pumped into me from uncounted sewers. A slimy froth cling to what little plant life is left along my putrid banks. My head waters are choked with cans, bottles, wrappers, cars and other nameless debris. My flow is reduced to a running cancerous sore and I reek of dead fish and decay. I am too foul for man or beast. For me, the death knell is soundless, the sun consumes me. In time, man will stand in my dust and say, "Once there was a river here."

*Zenon D'Astous Sr.*

## WAKING AT DAWN BY THE RIVER

In the dark river  
whiteness is the only splash  
when the egret lands.

*Stephen Sossaman*

\* \* \* \* \*

Right near our farm the river is a busy  
neighborhood of fish.  
There are fishermen.

I cannot see too far, though. The great  
boulder is in the way.  
I cannot see the dam and the mill and  
the two mountains.  
But they are there. Right near our farm.

*Mary Mulqueen*



# Captain Hays' Company

*by William S. Hart*

A walk through the older sections of some of the burial grounds in Granby, Connecticut will show some flags or other commemorative markers to indicate graves of soldiers of the American Revolution. Several of the headstones list the name of the veteran and mention he served in Captain Samuel Hays' Company.

This did not have much meaning until recently I went through a trunk of old papers left by a long deceased relative. One paper of note was a printed application form for membership in the S.A.R. or Sons of the American Revolution which is the brother organization to the D.A.R.

The application showed the relative was claiming his right to be a member because he was related to Moses Gossard buried in the West Granby cemetery. Attached to this was a handwritten letter from the office of the Adjutant General's Office, State of Connecticut dated Hartford, February 7th 1898.

The first point of interest was that Moses Gossard's dates of service were from August 22, 1776 to September 25, 1776 which was only about one month. The letter further said he served as a Private in Captain Hays' Company which was in the 18th Regiment under Colonel Jonathan Pettibone of Simsbury, Connecticut.

The startling part of the letter was that it says these troops "contributed to what is sometimes described as the 'panic' at Kip's Bay." Trying to dig further into the facts behind that statement was somewhat difficult as the old military and its records for 1776 were not clearly defined or properly preserved.

A book compiled in 1889 by the Authority of the General Assembly in Hartford lists a somewhat complete history of the records of service of Connecticut men in the Revolution.

In 1776 the following three types of service were in existence:

1. Continental Troops—These constituted the body of George Washington's Army in the field throughout the war. In 1776 Connecticut raised eight Regiments.

2. State Troops—These were neither Continental or Militia, but raised mainly in each part of the war, to act as reinforcements to the army in the field.

3. The Militia—This, the third distinctive class of troops, was the standing Militia in the state. The Militia represented the greater part of the male population in the state. The number of effective Militia during the war years ranged from 22,000-25,000 men. (1)

One of the triggers for the 'panic' at Kip's Bay was Saint Patrick's Day 1776 when, under pressure from General George Washington's troops the Britisher, Sir William Howe, gave up the siege of Boston and was forced to evacuate.

Washington felt certain Sir William Howe would join with his brother, Admiral Lord Howe, who commanded the British Fleet and proceed to take New York City. (2)

To assist his limited Continental Troops General Washington requested Connecticut send down a portion of her Militia. At this point Connecticut already had nine State and eight Continental Regiments on active duty. Connecticut responded and put out two requisitions.

The first was for fourteen Regiments of Militia from west of the Connecticut River to serve from August until "the Exigency should be over." The second was for nine Regiments east of the river to serve from September on. (3)

Captain Samuel Hays' Company of Granby, which was then part of ancient Simsbury and called Salmon Brook Society, was summoned to active duty. The records show this unit consisted of twenty-five enlisted men and three officers. Five of them were Holcombs and four of them Gossards. Tilly Gossard, age thirty, was listed as drummer. (4)

The Captain Hays' Company marched to New Haven and then went by boat to land at Flatbush on Long Island on August 22, 1776 and became part of the 18th Regiment led by Colonel Jonathan Pettibone. Shortly after on August 27, 1776 other American troops lost the Battle of Long Island.

The military powers then gave much thought to evacuating New York City. General Washington made the decision not to withdraw from the entire island but would divide his men between Manhattan and the mainland at Kingsbridge.

The British, under Admiral Howe, sent many gunboats and troops ships up the East River hoping to isolate the island of Manhattan. On September 12th the Americans decided to move out but they still had troops on the lower island. Suddenly on September 15, 1776, a Sunday morning, the British forces struck at Kip's Bay which was located about where 34th street and the East River are today.

A Connecticut Brigade under a Colonel William Douglas, tried to hold a position but failed and the "scarlet laden boats" looking like "a large clover field in full bloom" made a landing on Manhattan without problems.

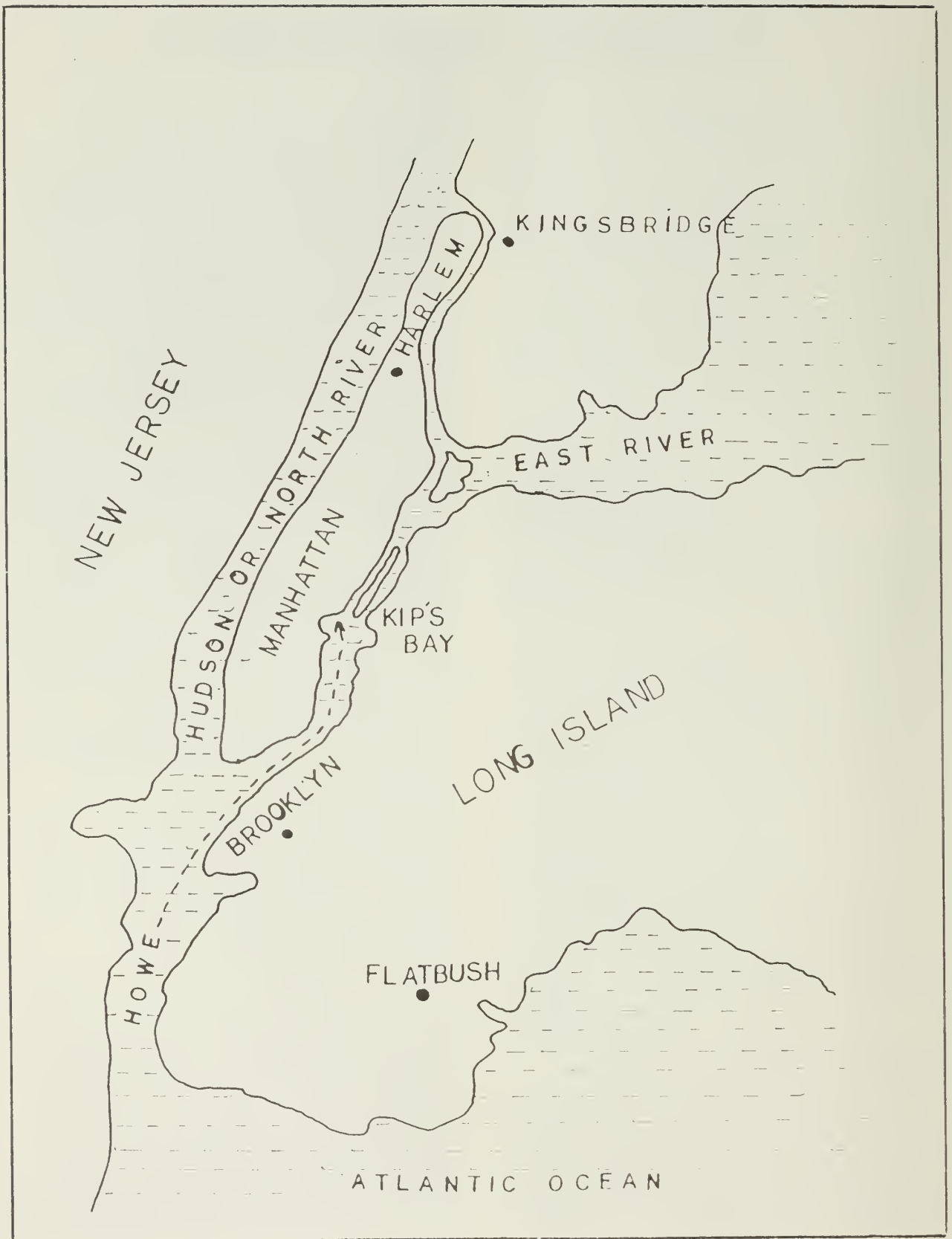
General Washington was only four miles away in Harlem and he rushed to the scene. "The panic he observed infuriated him, for both the supporting Brigades of Colonel Samuel Parsons of Connecticut and General Fellows of Massachusetts were in wild retreat. Washington and Putnam used every means in their power to rally the troops but to no avail. The 'disgraceful and dastardly conduct of the troops' as Washington described it, compelled him to withdraw toward Harlem, though not before he himself came perilously close to being capture." (5)

As can be understood morale was at a very low point and many of the poorly disciplined troops deserted. It was estimated 6,000 out of 8,000 Connecticut Militia deserted. Colonel Gold S. Silliman said, "for as well the officers as the men belonging to the Militia, behaved extremely ill; and officers of all ranks & privates kept deserting & running off, in a most shameful scandalous manner; and some were taken sick and a great many more pretended to be so."

Colonel John Mead's Regiment from Stamford area dwindled from 600 to 74 men. (6)

George Washington wrote to his brother, Augustine, "that the game is pretty near up," and he placed the blame chiefly on the "accursed policy of short enlistments" and "too great a dependence on the militia." (7)

The previously mentioned book of 1889 "Record of Service of Connecticut Men" treated the troops more kindly by saying "as these troops were hastily summoned, poorly armed and provided for, and generally undisciplined, effective service could not be expected of them" — "Better troops would have found it difficult to withstand the shock. The experience proved a valuable one to the mil-





itiamen who were to be called out again more than once during the war." (8)

The service records for Captain Hays' Company show most arrived at New York on August 22, 1776 and were discharged September 25, 1776. The Paymaster Rules say they were paid from "day of their arrival in New York, to the day of discharge, & allowing one day for every twenty miles travel to and from camp."

In conclusion, the decent men of Captain Hays' Company, 18th Regiment, acted no differently from the average militiamen then in service. They were primarily a home guard type force and as militiamen even elected their own officers and didn't really have an effective chain of command within each company. If there were pressing problems back at the farm or it was harvest time, they just took off at will. Because of their normal hunting skills they were better at shooting from behind trees and stone walls than standing up as a cohesive fighting unit.

These patriotic men were called to a duty beyond their training to face battle-seasoned troops. History shows that after this stumbling start in 1776 the Militiamen applied themselves to further mili-

tary efforts and after proper training, were disciplined and effective soldiers who contributed greatly to the successful outcome of the war.

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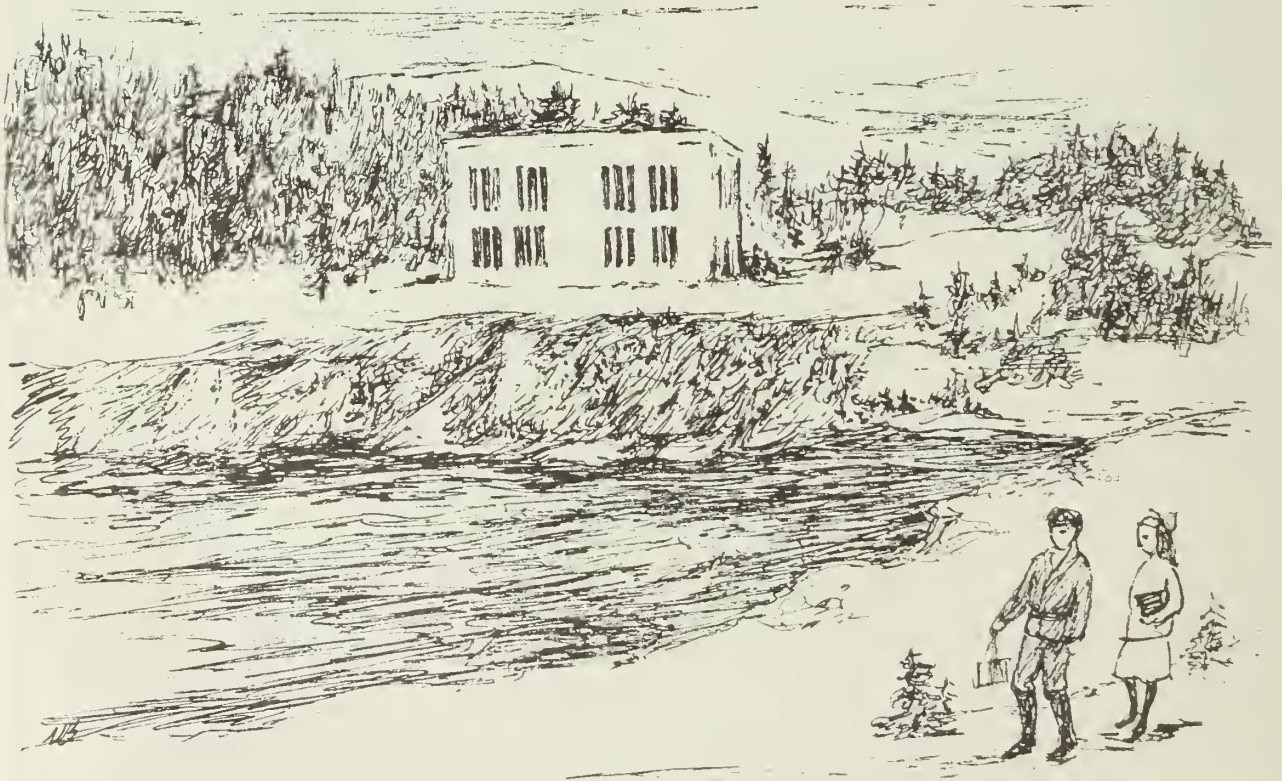
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# THE WORONOCO SCHOOL

*by Doris H. Wackerbarth*

When I was a girl ambling home from Woronoco School, down the long, tree-shaded stairway and steep, wide pathway below it, across the brook and the Blandford Road, down the odd little dell between the Higgin's house and the parsonage, across Route 20 under Pete Drumgool's supervision, and eventually to the geographic center of town, I used to wonder why the school was ever built where it was. People always remarked on its unusual location, above the village, far removed from town, convenient to nothing. Considering how the town was built on a series of natural terraces along steep

Berkshire foothills, when earth-moving equipment was a shovel and a pair of horses and a wagon, it may be that the site was chosen because it was at least a fairly large open space. (The school building that preceded it had been built when the mills were new, on a wedge of a sidehill beside the road that went up behind the store, where it joined Laurel Road. It was torn down when the Strathmore Community Building was built. Until then, it served as the Boys and Girls (and Women's) Clubhouse. The men's club house was a pool hall on the corner of Main Street and Bridge St.)



If it is true that exercise stimulates the brain, then the Woronoco school population had much to be thankful for. Only a few pupils lived just above Blandford Road and were within a few minutes walk of the school, and even they had a long climb down to the road that had to be retraced, going home. Only two persons were ever spared that last gravelly climb to those long, broad stairs up to the school yard. One was Miss Louella Young, the school nurse, who in reality was a nurse for the Hampden County tuberculosis control authority. She was as round as she was high, and while she had a Model T Ford, she parked down by the bridge and huffed and puffed her way up the hill; she drove up when she got a Model A Ford Coupe that she could maneuver along the wood road that gave access for coal deliveries and other such heavy supplies. The other person who drove up was Mr. Orcutt, the new superintendent, who was very tall and probably quite young. He drove a big, heavy car almost to the front door of the school. Most of the students lived at extreme ends of the town, across the river, along the avenues that took off in opposite directions at the far end of the bridge. There was not a house within a half mile in either direction from the beginning of those streets. Walking across that bridge in winter time and during spring rains was a test of endurance that everyone took for granted. And everyone went home for *dinner*, an hour and fifteen minutes allowed, with no exceptions. Never was a car waiting to pick up anyone!

Until Strathmore got a truck that could make the first steep grade full of coal and navigate the road to the school without breaking an axle, coal was brought in by a team of horses. When the driver didn't get away before we poured out of school

enroute home at noontime, he let us kids pile into the back of the empty wagon. We thought it great sport to be jostled along, but our mothers didn't appreciate it. Not only were we late getting home for dinner, but that coal dust wasn't exactly decorative.

The only truly flat area at the Woronoco school was the side lawn that ended where a steep bank dropped perhaps a hundred feet to the brook. No trees on that mountainside were allowed to grow so high that they would block the view of the school from Route 20. There was a tulip tree near the corner of Blandford road and the main road, though, that grew so tall and straight the blossoms were opposite the first floor classrooms. The side lawn of the school was beautifully manicured, and was off limits to students; the rest of the grounds remained the pasture land it had been originally.

At the top of the stairs from town, a concrete sidewalk divided the show lawn from the playground. The lower grades played in the flat area next to the walk, and just beyond them the middle grade boys played marbles and mumblety-peg (no boy was without his jackknife) and girls played hop scotch and jumped rope in season. In winter, everyone played fox and geese all over the school ground, conditions permitting. For a while, when I was first in school, we kids (Children sounds too pedantic, and students would not be the right word!) were allowed to play on the cliff, so called, an outcropping of ledge that walled us in on the west side of the school yard. It was only high enough to be interesting, and had little ridgy paths we could run up and down, and there were wonderful paths along the top, in the woods. It exercised the same muscles as today's jungle gyms. Perhaps too many children got too far from super-



vision, or got back from recess too late, or someone may have gotten hurt, because all too soon it became forbidden territory.

The baseball diamond must have been a main attraction from day one, its baselines were so well worn by the time I was old enough to play. Getting to play scrub baseball was a rite of passage, which by some arrangement was shared alternately by the older boys and girls. To see it as an adult is to grin indulgently. It was truly a diamond in the rough. It had a definite tilt, and undulated from home plate to second base though I would have sworn it was flat. The distance between the bases varied, depending on the location of the immovable boulders that served as bases. A row of maple trees planted along the edge of the walk that went around the west side of the school formed a protective barrier for the school's tall windows in case a solid swing connected with a curved pitch; two gnarled, old apple trees, left from the farm that the school replaced, took care that there was no need for an outfielder. Beyond the apple trees, up to the edge of the woods that swung around from the cliff and circled us completely on the north, was a field that burst into a show of white daisies in the spring, followed by a feast of wild strawberries. The strawberries kept all the girls searching, even the older, sophisticated ones during their baseball off-days.

Today, a bulldozer would make the whole area flat, but when the Woronoco school was built the only land that was flattened was the first approach to the playgrounds and the building. Just around the corner from the front door, the ground rose suddenly so that a masonry wall created a sheltered corner for the walk that went from the front door to the back door and the areaway entry to the

girl's side of the building.

The girls areaway entry went into the kitchen. (A sink and two burner kerosene stove, and two long tables covered with oilcloth, and very old settee benches.) When the Russell Mountain School was closed, those children who came in a station wagon, ate their box lunches there. The rest of us could bring our lunches only when there was a blizzard, then everyone did. I don't remember any time when the weather was so bad that school was closed in the eight years I went to the Woronoco School, though I can remember being kept home under protest because my mother thought the weather too rough; I remember, too, with pleasure, of course, a special whistle blast announcing no school because there was furnace trouble. To get to school during a heavy snow was an anticipated adventure, and carrying a lunch was its own reward. The basement was bedlam, then, closed in as we were, but what a treat! It compared to the excitement of Coney Island.

On the other side of the school, on the boy's side, the room that corresponded to the kitchen was an empty room to which teachers of the lower grades took children to learn Here We Go Loopey Lou and Bluebird, Bluebird, and such sedate folk dances. Those were savored occasions, too. Of course the girls and boys rest-rooms were on their respective sides of the building, and the furnace room and supply room formed a barrier between them. The remaining half of the basement was a large empty space where pupils waited in bad weather for the bell to ring and the phonograph to start playing the Washington Post March. It was such an unvarying accompaniment that others than myself must come to attention and start to move at the very sound of it, forever after.

The school building was three stories tall, two and one half stories exposed. It was brick to the top of the basement windows and stucco from then on up. There were four classrooms, two over two, with tall, wide windows all facing east, so that the teachers always had beautiful, flowering plants — fuschias blossomed there year after year as cactus would today. The coat room was a wide corridor across the end of each room, against the blank south or north walls. Wide stairs, with a broad landing led from the front and back doors to a well-windowed corridor on each floor, and was about half as wide as the classrooms. The first four grades were located in the two classrooms off the first floor corridor and the upper four grades in the two rooms off the corridor above.

When someone was inspired with the idea that we should have a phonograph and march to music, a money-raising event was put on by the teachers. It is the only such occasion I recall. By the time radios came into being, and our music teacher wanted us exposed to Walter Damrosch, civic responsibility must have borne the cost. Woronoco was of a progressive state of mind, and Russell schools had both Art and Music teachers visit each class each week. They taught a lesson and left follow-up lessons for the teachers to use during the week. Besides absorbing more than we appreciated, we learned how to square things off, which is a very handy bit of knowledge. In seventh and eighth grade we even learned how to transpose keys on lined scales, though that would seem to me now to be busy work, since it had no relevance to any of us. But it did keep us concentrating, and some of us must remember that we learned how to do it though we never did, and didn't remember the process for

long

Holidays during the school year were very special. Especially Memorial Day and Armistice Day. For those occasions, all classes learned mournful songs and selected members from all grades learned poems to recite. ("In Flanders Field the Poppies grow, between the crosses, row on row — " and "Shoot if you will, this old gray head, but not your country's flag!") For Armistice Day, a member of the VFW in Westfield came for a few years, until George Fox was prevailed upon. For Memorial Day, for years white-bearded, ancient Mr. Frost, veteran of the Civil War, came to say a few words. The best part of the whole thing was the way everyone crowded into the seventh and eighth grade room. Each desk was crowded by two or three students hanging on to each other to keep from falling off the chair, and parents came and crowded in around the sides and across the back of the room. Many men who worked shift work came, and some of the mothers. It seemed as if all the Polish parents came. They always looked pleased to bursting, and their children were always so happy to see them there. Those occasions were much more meaningful than they would have been in an impersonal auditorium. Fire laws would prevent such intimacy, now, too.

Of course, for Thanksgiving and Christmas and occasionally on Arbor Day and Flag Day and other holidays we had special exercises, but the Memorial Day and Armistice Day programs were special. On at least one occasion there was an outdoor pageant. The roof of the coal cellar was a cement platform against the building, on the east side of the school. It was just high enough to serve as a platform, and may have been designed with that in mind. Together with the fine spread of

lawn, it was an ideal spot for a Spring presentation. I remember older girls in diaphanous gowns taking part in a ceremony of some sort there, with the spectators, parents and the rest of the school, watching intently from the lawn; I looked forward to when I would be old enough to take part, but I don't recall any more such performances, possibly because we began to have a man teacher for seventh and eighth grade.

As an adult, when I was living in Arizona, in the summer when the rain came in torrents, I was reminded of the Blandford Brook and the bridge we crossed over every school day. There was no sound of rushing water during the rain in Arizona, nor was there that special smell of a brook running high. The Flood of 1955 brought such torrents of water down Blandford Brook that it went over its banks and down through the dell between the Higgins' house and the parsonage, taking the road with it. Remarkably, the little bridge at the foot of the hill

to the school remained firmly in place, but the destruction to the highway meant the end of the Woronoco School. The building stood straight and tall, but there no longer was access to it. Its classes were moved to Russell.

The building of the Massachusetts Turnpike dealt the final *coup de grace*. It walled off Blandford Road as we knew it, by dumping tons of fill where we once picked violets in the spring and blue gentians in the fall. When we were playing baseball, or making daisy wreaths, or picking strawberries, if anyone had tried to convince us that there would be a speedway high along the ridge of the mountains above us, why wouldn't we have been scornful? Our school yard was already so high above everything else that it was beyond reason. But if you go visit what is left — only the baseball diamond and a cement walk going nowhere — you will hear the traffic above and wonder at the locations planners choose, just as others did, with regard to Woronoco School.





# Cold Spring Farm and Its People

*Taken from an account by Effie Scott Burkis, descendant of John Kelly*

*by Connie L. B. Dorrington*

In England, around 1735, there was a family known as the James and John Kelly family. For many years there had been only one boy in each generation. One would be James, his son would be named John, *his* son James, and so on. One James married a girl named Mary against his family's wishes and so was disinherited. They came to America. By 1760, they were living in Connecticut and there James died.

Early in the summer of 1764, Mary Kelly, her two sons James and John, aged nineteen and twenty, and twin daughters Anna and Austis, came to Worthington, Massachusetts with a group who would be the first settlers of the town, which was then only unbroken forest. They spent a night off of what is now Old Post Road, expecting to see Indians but were bothered by nothing more than mosquitoes. In the morning, the families took up their lots. The Kelly's lot was two miles southwest of the present Center, on a well-watered east-facing slope. Their first house there was of logs. A few years later, a frame house was built and the cabin was used as a wood shed.

Anna eventually married Guard Chandler and went to Worcester. Austis married a Boston merchant named Nathaniel Green. In 1776, John married Martha Wright. About 1786, James went to New York State and was never heard from. It was thought that he was killed by Indians.

In the early years of the town, West Street was thickly settled and was considered to be the center of the town. At that time, Worthington extended farther west into what is now Middlefield. At that time, also, the state granted charters to groups of citizens willing to take over the improvement and maintenance of main roads with

the privilege of reimbursing themselves through the collection of tolls. The first such corporation in this region was known as the Third Massachusetts Turnpike Corporation, and the first road was from Northampton, through Worthington to Pittsfield, a section of the Boston and Albany road. The second road to be laid out was from Cummington, along West Street to Chester. (Another source considers this one to be the earlier road.)

John bought and cleared four hundred acres. Brick was made in what was called the spring lot. (Until the recent building on Scott Road, the remains of what appeared to be a kiln was visible.)

Indians were seen occasionally as they passed through town. They would camp overnight in a sheltered spot with a spring to the west of the Kelly home. Deer were plentiful and there were wolves, the last of which was killed on the farm by John in 1791. It was winter and they left the wolf to freeze. Next day, they stood the creature on its legs and six-year-old James played ride-the-horse on its back.

went into the missionary barrel.

At the Center, there was a cobbler shop where the children's shoes were made to measure, while at the Corners there was a millinery shop run by Miss Sarah Bisbee, aunt to John and Ellen. Since it was the only shop of its kind in the hill towns, Miss Bisbee had a thriving business.

There were but three families that did not go to church every Sunday. Services lasted all day, beginning with the missionary meeting for the ladies. Next came the morning sermon, then lunch, followed by Sabbath School and another preaching service. Fast Day was observed once a year like the Sabbath, with no work and no meals except for the children's lunch. It was spent reading the Bible and praying.

The first survey of the Boston and Albany ran through Worthington, crossing near the farm's east pasture, the stakes of which remained for many years. A Mr. Brewster was so strongly opposed to the crossing of his land that, having sufficient influence, he forced the abandonment of the route.

In 1874, Ellen Kelly married Ransom Scott and for forty-nine years he farmed the land. It was she who originated the name of "Cold Spring Farm" for the abundant springs of pure cold water.

The old homestead has seen many changes and passed through many hands but it still stands squarely to the winds with no end in sight, a fitting tribute to the staunch Kelly homesteaders.





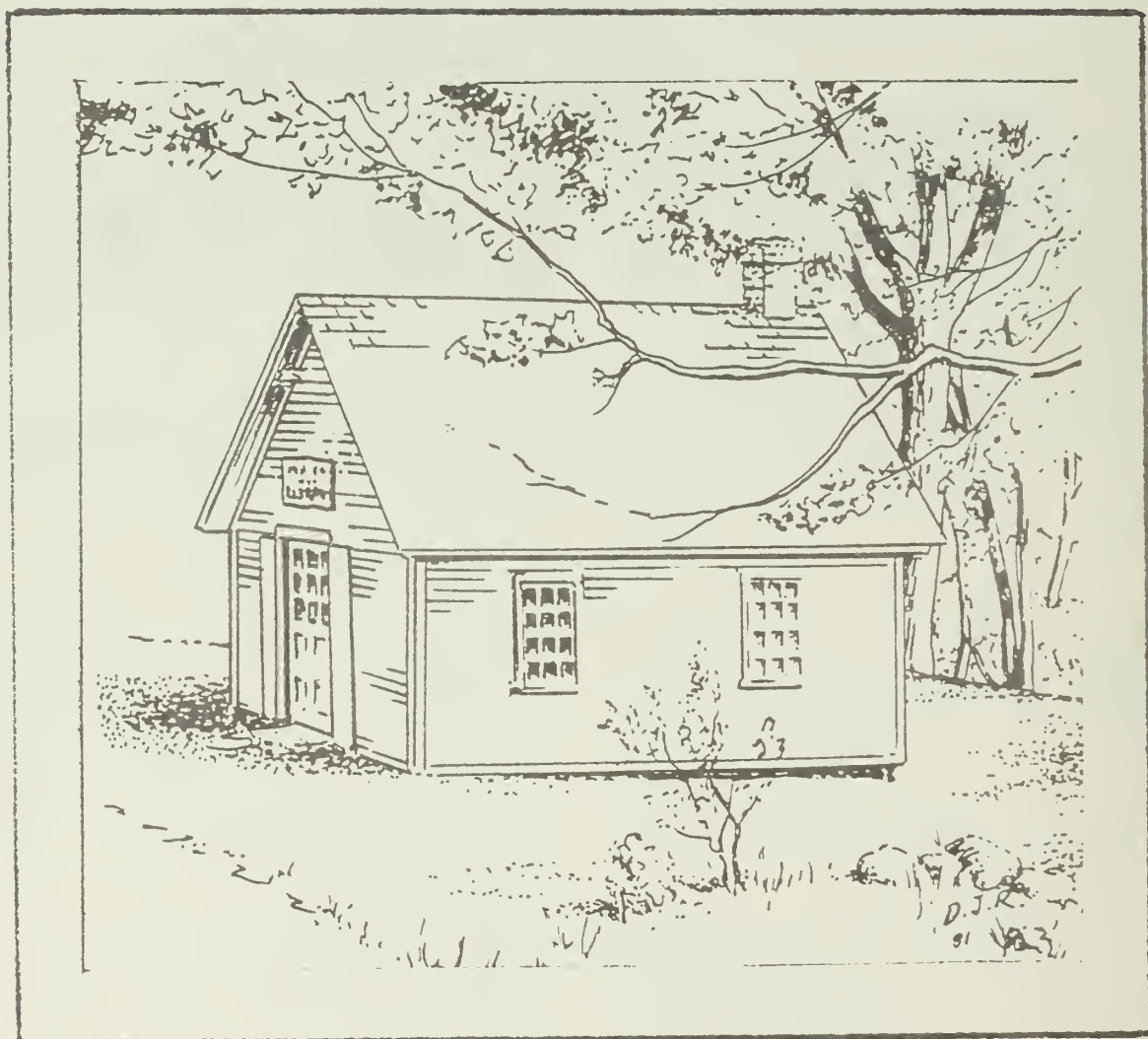
In 1792, the present house was built about ten rods north of the first frame house. After it was completed, the first house was torn down. Two doors that were put on the present house are all that remains of the original frame house. In the early 1900's, the roof was raised and two dormer windows added.

Wheat, rye, and corn were raised on the farm and taken to mills in other parts of town. Clothing was made from home-grown flax and wool. Candles were made from tallow and soap from grease. Cattle were fattened for beef and sold in neighboring towns. It was said that this farm was one of the three best in town and the field of over sixty acres to the east of the house was the largest mowing. There were three large barns on the farm: one for horses, one for cattle, one for sheep. All travel was by horseback and all work done with oxen.

Canning was unknown. All preserving was done by drying. In the fall, there were neighborhood apple parings at which bushels of apples were pared, quartered and sliced before being strung to hang on long poles over the fireplace to dry. Pumpkin was dried in the same manner. In earlier days, one of the social events for the men was training day when they met according to law for drill on the common. James, son of John and Martha, was Captain.

In 1842, James Kelly married Martha Bisbee of Chesterfield. Her brother was the Reverend John Bisbee, who was the pastor in Worthington for over twenty years. When younger, Martha went to Hinsdale where she learned the tailoress trade. James and Martha had two children, John and Ellen. Ellen told, years later, of going to sleep to the sound of the spinning wheel. The first good pair of stockings she knit





*Grace Hall Memorial Library  
Montgomery*

# *Rebirth of a Montgomery Library*

*by Genevieve Schenna*

When winter really came full blast in the late 1890's, at least three or four ladies of the town took a good supply of library books into their homes. . . with the intent of exchanging them with another family as winter passed its many days of being snowbound. But it was one of the special social events in reasonably good weather, to hitch up the team and travel by sleigh to the neighbors for a welcome visit, as well as exchanging books taken from the library in late fall.

Since October of 1987, when the Montgomery library reopened, again the warmth of welcome and social fun of seeing an old friend or meeting a new neighbor has been revived at the now Grace Hall Memorial Library of Montgomery. The welcome has always been there through the work of the Allyn, Williams, and Hall families. Since October of 1987, the library has become again much more than a place to pick up your favorite book. With the growing population of this town, there is no other place to meet new and old friends. It's now the place to figure out a problem in quilting, cooking, taxation, even the newest diet for lowering your cholesterol or raising your potassium. Since one of the present librarians is a dietician. . . she's certain to be interested in your problem. Since the other librarian is a teacher. . . you're sure to find the right age book for your child. If your visit is on an especially cold day, you

may even get a cup of tea.

The Montgomery librarians enjoy the special camaraderie that seems steeped deep in the cozy interior. Families with children make the library a "must stop" and know the librarians care enough to find or order a special book for them.

The librarians feel a powerful, kind, and gentle spirit of the past. Whether it be an Allyn, Williams, Kelso, Avery, or Hall, all of these have been more than generous with their work and caring.

Mrs. Grace Hall was appointed librarian in 1932. She added new books and services. A quote in the 1972 Montgomery town report from Grace Hall, librarian, says "many teen-age and juvenile books were borrowed from the Bookmobile for the summer. These were widely read and saved buying. Bookmobile books are at the Librarian's house for circulation and anyone wishing any special book may obtain it by calling the Librarian." Mrs. Hall also ran a summer reading program at the school house where she taught school the rest of the school year. Mrs. Hall well established a record of service.

Dorothy Tinney, Mrs. Hall's daughter, took over the library in 1976. She was forced to close it when a change of regular job hours made it impossible to be open afternoons or evenings. She still made the library available as much as possible. She is now a wonderful supportive resource.

The present librarians call her the librarian emeritus.

Much of the growth of the library since it reopened is due to the generosity of patrons from Montgomery, and surrounding towns. Helen Scott of Chester has donated beautiful art and nature books. She often shares a lovely passage or quotation with us, the librarians. She gave us a quotation from Helen Hayes, "Take one brisk walk to the library. Take out any book by a tried and true writer. Take a brisk walk home and read with all attention. The exercise plus the tonic of the book will provide all physical and mental requirements for good health."

The Friends of the Library have provided volunteer hours on Saturday, and sometimes during the week for projects, and library work. The Friends have sponsored a successful book and bake sale. A Halloween party, again sponsored by the Friends, with a film shown by the librarians, was a very successful event.

Other libraries, Russell, Southampton, Easthampton, and Westfield have given us books, advice, and help.

Wonderful people from the Western Mass. Regional Library System in Hatfield have backed us, supported us, straightened our efforts, and sent us in the right direction times without number.

Many repairs and improvements have been made by a gentleman who's insulated, put on missing siding, storm windows, painted, etc. He's Mr. Robert Goodman, husband of one of the librarians. The storm windows were donated by

the Fox family of Montgomery.

These pages just aren't long enough to make note of all the donations the library has received.

The library has completed a very successful year. We now have given out over one hundred and fifty personal library cards. Our summer reading program for children showed over two hundred books read. It's hard to show an average figure as to books circulated every week. . . however, 83 books taken out in one day was a happy record for us.

Our budget has been increased, and we are now in the process of ordering new materials and books. We never dreamed our circulation would hit the thousand mark, but it has.

We are co-librarians. I am Genevieve Schenna, and I have lived in Montgomery for 30 years. I have my Masters in Education, and I retired from teaching in June of 1987. I've always loved children and books.

Janet Goodman has a degree in Dietetics, and has lived in Montgomery for 10 years. She also loves children and books.

For a library building that is 20'5" by 16'4", this one radiates an unusual feeling of warmth and welcome far beyond its size. Even though the wood stove that stood at the west end is no longer there, and the only heat is a small electric wall heater, the library stays warm with friendly conversation and exchange of views and books.





3 Oak Hill Road  
Canaan, NH 03741

8 July 88

To the Editor of *Stone Walls*  
Box 85, Huntington, MA 01050

Dear Sir or Madam:

Recently a friend gave me a copy of your publication for "Spring 88" (Vol. 13, No. 5), and I have read it with considerable interest and enjoyment. I write you, however, about an error which I think you may wish to correct in a subsequent issue, since the person involved is well-known in your area, and presently resides in Ilion, New York.

On page 29, in the article by Kenneth C. Gridley, there is an inference that (the Rev.) Robert Barr — as a boy — was a ward of the State. Mr. Gridley was probably not in a position to know the facts, which I state here:

Robert was the first-born child of George and Vera Hill Barr, and was born 24 Sept. 1911, at an apartment on "Worthington Road" across the street from Stanton's Sawmill. Later the family moved to "Barr's Hill" (Norwich Hill). His siblings are Lavina (1913), Lincoln (1916-1968), and Luella (1920).

Both Robert and Lincoln became ordained ministers, Lincoln serving local churches and as chaplain in the Air Force; Robert (as correctly stated by Mr. Gridley) became a foreign missionary, and served many years in Malawi, Africa. He also was for a while interim pastor of the Huntington Federated Church; is now retired.

Since I was a close friend of Robert, my brother Stephen married his sister Lavina, and my wife Frances Knox Childs has researched the genealogy of the Barr family, I can certify that the facts stated here are correct.

Respectfully,

(Rev.) Arthur W. Childs

Seeking information on *Louise Dickinson Rich*, well known New England writer. Born Huntington, Mass. June 14, 1903, moved to Gouldsboro, Maine. Is she still living, if so where?

Ms. Gail L. Cathey  
532 Russwood Drive  
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Interested in *Geer, Osgood, Convers, Stowell and Thompson* families of Peru, Chesterfield, Worthington, and Norwich (now Huntington). I am updating the Geer family history.

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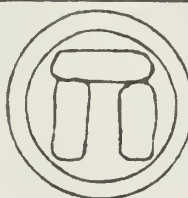
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